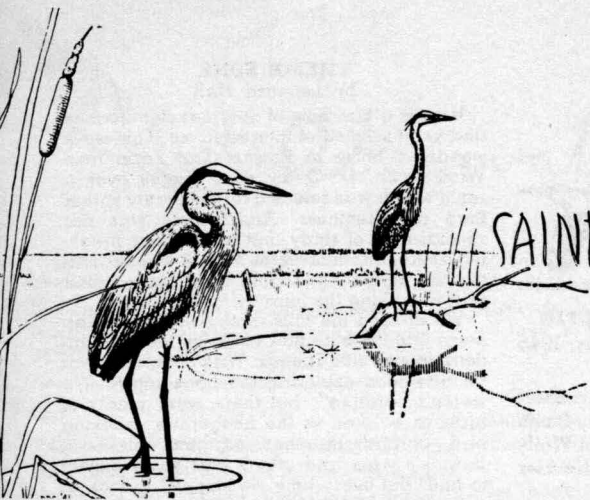




SAINT-LOUIS BIRD CLUB

BULLETIN

VOL. 15, No. 3

April-May, 1946

BIRD CLUB LOYALTY NIGHT

BIRD CLUB LOYALTY NIGHT will be the occasion of Bert Harwell's return to St. Louis with a magnificent new all color motion picture entitled "Outdoor Symphony". By means of his color pictures and his imitative interpretations of wildlife, he unfolds the harmonies of nature in one eventful program. All aspects of nature provide the notes of his music: the blue sea, with the birds that fly over it, and those that live beside it. The enormous Utah marshes with their thousands of nesting birds. The wildflowers of northern meadows, and farmers reaping their harvest. The golden song of meadowlarks. The tropical swamps of Florida, with the Seminoles who make them their home. The great towering mountains of Yellowstone, with their wild animals and rhythmic geysers. The seldom-seen glories of Glacier National Park, with its symbolic harmony of nations, where the boundaries of the International Peace Park join two nations together instead of keeping them apart. Those who have heard Bert Harwell before will need no urging to attend his "Outdoor Symphony". For those who have not, it will prove a rewarding experience. Be sure to come.

By now the Club's annual LOYALTY NIGHT appeal has doubtless reached you by mail. We appreciate deeply the contributions already received. Others may be mailed in or turned in at the LOYALTY NIGHT meeting, April 25, at Soldan. They are urgently needed in order that the club may continue its ever enlarging program.

FOREST PARK BIRD WALKS

Inquiries about the spring bird walks have been particularly numerous this year. It looks as though we shall have a big turnout, and we are hoping to have enough leaders so that the groups will not have to be too large. This year all Club members and friends of the Club are invited to attend. Walks will begin Sunday, April 28, and continue for the first three Sundays in May. Meet at Jefferson Memorial (park side) at 7:30 A.M. Walks are scheduled to last until 10 A.M. but you may drop out earlier if necessary. Last year was the first year of this later starting date. Those who participated agreed it was a successful change. And those who recall a certain early April bird walk of two years ago, with temperature at 32, and a fierce wind, were certainly glad of the shift. See you bright and early . . . April 28, May 5, 12, and 19!

ANNUAL MEETING

Tom and Arlene Hadley of Detroit with their picture story "Happy Valley" will feature the Club's annual meeting on Monday, May 20. This will be something a little different in the way of lectures. The

Hadleys bring to the lecture platform a picture-poem of the beauty of nature. There are canoe treks down Michigan streams, and hikes over the mountains, in country richly storied in the Long-fellow legends. It is a simple and beautiful film. Remember, this meeting will be at Brown Hall, Washington University.



BERT HARWELL



ST. LOUIS BIRD CLUB BULLETIN

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TEXAS UNEXAGGERATED

On March 27 Alfred M. Bailey presented a color camera view of the "Land of the Longhorns" . . . with sequences taken particularly at the newest national park, Big Bend; at the million acre King Ranch; and at the Audubon-patrolled islands along the Gulf Coast. Most unusual and most beautiful shots were those of the Rio Grande wild turkey, showing the coppery color and iridescent sheen of the feathers, as well as the proud glory of the male plumage in strut. And the mass views of roseate spoonbills and American egrets on a tiny coastal island brought forth applause. Mr. Bailey paid appropriate tribute to the Audubon Society for its work in watching over and patrolling these sanctuary islands.

AUDUBON FIRST EDITION

As part of its Centennial Celebration, which began April 9, the Mercantile Library has on display its folio first edition of Audubon's Birds of America. Bird Club members are invited to stop by and see these magnificent volumes. This is one of the few remaining complete sets and we believe the only one in this area. This set may well have been Audubon's own, since each volume is autographed; and originally the plates bore notations written by Audubon himself.

* * *

FOUNTAIN PEN FOUND at the last lecture.
Phone Central 0631.

THEME SONG

by Leonard Hall

Here is a bird note of no great significance and yet it seemed of interest to me. Last week we drove home to Possum Trot Farm from Washington, D. C. by easy stages over a route which was selected for its beauty rather than its directness. Architecture was our special field of study, but with spring breaking along the whole of the way, it was natural that the bird songs should have played their part in making the journey enjoyable.

We crossed the hills through Ashby's Gap down into the beautiful valley of the Shenandoah to visit with friends. With them we spent an afternoon exploring the back roads. We weren't "birding", but there were plenty of birds to be seen in the hedgerows: mocking bird, catbird, thrasher, cardinal, bluebird, Bewick's wren and others that you'd expect to find. But every time we stopped to look at some fine old house, there was one song we were certain to hear . . . the song of the white-throat.

Next morning we left Winchester to drive down the famous Dixie Skyline Road which runs along the very crest of the Blue Ridge. The elevations are from 2400 to 3400 feet and on the branches of the trees there were traces of snow and ice which glistened like jewels in the morning sun. Little bird life was visible except for the crows and buzzards soaring in the updrafts from the deep hollows. Sometimes we'd see two or three find such an air current and start to ride it, a thousand feet below us. Soon others would appear from every direction until there'd be two dozen or more, rising and rising until they were lost to sight above us.

Finally we had to drop down a country road, deep into a hollow where the sun had set long since. As we reached the valley floor, once again we heard the song of the white-throat, and again next morning as we drove around the beautiful town of Lexington where Stonewall Jackson and Robert E. Lee lie buried. Every time we stopped to read a historical marker, there it would be, a sort of theme song for our journey.

Next morning when we stopped at Norris Dam there were dozens of them and their cheery "Old Sam Peabody, Peabody, Peabody" came from every direction . . . though I've never liked that description of the song too well. The white-throat was with us all up through the mountains of western Tennessee and into the Kentucky Bluegrass. Other songs we heard occasionally, but the white-throat always. We stopped at Horseshoe Lake in Illinois to find that all but a few hundred of the big Canada "honkers" had headed north for James Bay; we came north through valleys bright with peach and plum and redbud blossoms. And when we turned into the drive at Possum Trot late in the evening, the white-throat was still singing. For more than a thousand miles we'd hardly been out of hearing of that happy spring song.

Possum Trot Farm 3-28-46



Observations



Mixed flocks of blue and snow geese flew over St. Louis the night of March 2 in such numbers that many persons commented on hearing them. The next day many flocks of 75 and upward were seen. Blues as usual were more numerous than snows.

On March 24, Beulah Bedell, Frances Pickel and Ellen Cone saw an American egret at Marais Temps Clair. Good early date.

Also the same day, in St. Charles, Mrs. Gertrude Drury, Ethel Wolfe, Helen Einspinner and Helen Henke observed a flock of golden plover, and two turkey vultures. Strangely, turkey vultures are seldom seen in the flat meadow section of St. Charles County.

Three common loons, March 24 . . . seen by Hattie Ettinger and Cecelia Lehman. And four common loons on March 25, by Hattie and Alice Ettinger. Common loons, but certainly on the uncommon side, for most of us!

On March 9, Dr. and Mrs. Zempel observed a short-eared owl at West Alton. On March 17 they had greater scaup among a flock of lessers, at Horseshoe Lake.

Ruddy ducks seem to be in fair number in the St. Louis area this year. During March practically every group reported large rafts of them in many scattered locations.

On March 23, Susan Grumman, Robert Knickmeyer, Richard Reichle, Jr. and Earl Comfort had a field day in St. Charles County. Fourteen species of ducks were on their list thanks to Bob's 40-power telescope. Best of the list was a male hooded merganser.

A Leconte's sparrow has been observed in a field bordering the Meramec River at the end of Schuessler Road in St. Louis County. It was seen by various groups on many occasions during February and March. Always accommodating, this bird gave everyone a good opportunity to study it at close range from many angles and in various poses. Thus this "sharp tail" made its first appearance on the life list of several of our members.

In early March the Clinton Day family witnessed the mating flight of the woodcock, at Ranken. The bird flies straight up in the air performing gymnastics, singing as it makes its spiral descent. The Days are certainly fortunate since this is a rare sight and one well worth seeing.

SPRING CENSUS—May 4

The Club's annual Spring Census will be held on Sunday, May 4. Once again, now that war conditions are over, we hope to "spread ourselves" all over the area. The census will start with a complete coverage of Forest Park that morning, after which groups will cover the countryside within a 50 mile radius of St. Louis in order to attempt to beat a long-standing record of 177 species in one day.

MISSOURI AUDUBON MEETING

Mr. George Moore of Sullivan has announced that the 1946 annual meeting of the Audubon Society of Missouri will be held at the Kingsway Hotel, St. Louis, on Saturday, May 4, with a business meeting at 2 p.m. and a banquet at 8 p.m. All St. Louis members and friends of Missouri Audubon are invited. On the following day many of the out-of-town guests will join us on the Forest Park Walks and Spring Census.

MEMBERS PLEASE NOTE:

Kindly direct all phone calls to the Bird Club office, Central 0631.



Who's Who?



We extend a warm welcome to the following new members who have been recently added to our membership rolls: Guy Greenwell; Mrs. James Krause; Clara Kreft; D. B. Mabry; Mr. and Mrs. J. Massie; Mrs. William Mowrey.

...

Two more Club members, Bill Dierker and Eugene Heil, have returned from service, and are back in St. Louis.

...

Bob Hecht, now overseas, has asked that his Bird Club mail be sent to his Creve Coeur address, and reports that he expects to be back with us soon.

...

Mrs. F. H. Pough reports that our old friend Lloyd Freer is planning to study conservation at the University of Missoula, Montana, beginning next term.

...

An exhibition of Dick Grossenheider's paintings of Pacific birds was held recently at the Academy of Science, on Lindell.

The Club was pleased to have Mr. John H. Baker, president of the National Audubon Society, introduce Alfred M. Bailey, at our March Screen Tour lecture. He was in St. Louis to address the American Nature Study Society, in connection with the A. A. A. S. convention, as well as to pay the Club a visit. Wayne Short and Harold O'Byrne were speakers at the convention also.

...

We regret to lose our good member Clarke C. Miller of Wood River, Ill. We send our best wishes to him in his new home town of Whiting, Indiana.

...

Bill Disher had rejoined the Marine Corps for another two years.

...

On Sunday March 31, the Hill family were hosts to some of their St. Louis friends for a day of birding at "Hill's Hill".

AUDUBON NATURE CAMP AND CENTER

This summer the National Audubon Society is reopening its Nature Camp at Medomac, Maine (closed since 1942) for five two week periods. According to former campers it is a grand, cool place for birding and for various other types of nature work. Instruction and guidance are by top-notch naturalists. A similar series of two week nature courses is provided at the new Audubon Nature Center in Greenwich, Conn., which, by the way, is right in the heart of the proposed site for the U.N.O. headquarters. The Maine camp is on a picturesque wooded island off the coast of Maine, about 60 miles northeast of Portland. The programs of the two are supplementary, so that students attending either one will find much that is new and different in the program of the other. Both the camp and the center are suitable for novices as well as for experts; and both of them combine much fun with much learning. If you are interested, send a postcard to National Audubon Society, 1000 Fifth Avenue, New York City. Or phone Bird Club Office, Central 0631.